



FACT SHEET

BLM-MONTANA/DAKOTAS

MILES CITY FIELD OFFICE • 111 GARRYOWEN ROAD • MILES CITY, MONTANA 59301 • WWW.BLM.GOV/MT

Miles City Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision

FACT SHEET: Livestock Grazing

Program Contacts: Dawn Doran, Rangeland Management Specialist (406) 233-2800
Reyer Rens, Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist (406) 233-2800

The MCFO is responsible for administering livestock grazing on BLM-administered surface across the planning area. These BLM-administered lands are usually intermingled with private and state lands, which are grazed as one unit.

The MCFO administers 1,776 grazing allotments comprising approximately 2.7 million public acres and 546,570 public animal unit months (AUMs). There are 34 allotments (2 percent) with more than 10,000 acres and 1,110 allotments (63 percent) with less than 1,000 acres. The remaining 632 allotments (35 percent) are between 1,000 and 10,000 acres in size.

Cattle are the predominant class of livestock authorized, which are generally cow-calf pairs (calves are sold at weaning). Most yearlings are replacement heifers. According to the Rangeland Administration System, permitted allocations include cattle on 1,728 allotments, sheep on 132 allotments, horses on 101 allotments, yearling cattle on 33 allotments, bison on three allotments, and burros on one allotment.

Rangeland Health

In 1997, the Montana/Dakotas BLM State Director approved the *Montana/Dakotas Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management* (Standards). The MCFO Standards for Rangeland Health were included in the approval by the State Director and are described below.

- Standard 1: Uplands are in PFC (Proper Functioning Condition).
- Standard 2: Riparian areas and wetlands are in PFC.
- Standard 3: Water quality meets Montana State standards.
- Standard 4: Air quality meets Montana State standards.
- Standard 5: Habitats are provided for healthy, productive, and diverse native plant and animal populations and communities. Habitats are improved or maintained for special status species (federally threatened, endangered, candidates for this status, or Montana species of special concern).

Guidelines for grazing management are provided to maintain or improve resource conditions in upland and riparian habitats available to livestock grazing. The MCFO has completed the assessment of all of its allotments in relation to the Standards. Actions have been implemented in the 41 allotments (2 percent) determined to not be meeting one or more of the Standards.

If Standards for Rangeland Health are not met and livestock grazing determined to be the causal factor, regulation directs the authorized officer to implement actions (e.g., permit modifications, range improvement projects) prior to the next grazing season that will move the allotment towards meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health (43 CFR 4180). Permit modifications include changing season of use, changing type of livestock, addressing carrying capacity, and directing salt or mineral placement.

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Rangeland Monitoring

The BLM conducts rangeland monitoring to determine compliance with the Standards (or progress toward these standards) or Allotment Management Plan objectives. If monitoring indicates that progress is occurring, or standards and objectives are being met, management continues.

However, if progress is not shown, management adjustments are required to be made prior to the start of the next grazing season. Adjustments are made by agreement or decision through consultation, cooperation, and coordination with permittees and the interested public in accordance with legislation, regulation and policy.

Table 1: Miles City Draft RMP/EIS – Livestock Grazing Summary of Alternatives

Miles City Draft RMP/EIS – Livestock Grazing Summary of Alternatives					
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
Allowed	2.7 million acres	2.5 Million acres 2.1 million acres (sheep only)	2.7 million acres	2.7 million acres	2.7 million acres
Excluded	240 acres	210,000 acres 390,000 acres (sheep only)	6,800 acres 8,300 acres (sheep only)	3,100 acres	3,125 acres